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WORLD

Same-sex couples are the majority in community of penguins

By Muri Assunção
New York Daily News • May 06, 2019 at 6:05 pm



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African penguin walk out of the ocean on the sandy beach. (USO/Getty Images/iStockphoto)

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Minority no more!

Of the total population of 14 gentoo penguins who live at the Oceanworld Aquarium in Dingle, Ireland, eight of them are in a committed same-sex relationship.



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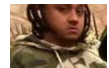
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"We have two homosexual pairs and two lesbian ones. You cannot tell a male penguin from a female by their sexual organs so the only way we know is when we see them mating and not producing chicks," Ocean World's animal manager Louise Overy told the Irish Mirror.

Dingle is a small port town on southwest Ireland's Dingle Peninsula, and the aquarium is no stranger to same-sex loving. "Five years ago Penelope and Misty got plenty of coverage but we never expected it to catch on," she said.

Gentoo penguins have a bright orange beak, white stripe over the head and lovely pink feet. They are the third largest penguin species in the world, reaching a height of between 27-35".

"The lesbian ones will take action if they feel broody. They will waddle over to a male to do what needs to be done and rear the chick with their female partner," she said. "They have maternal instincts the same as humans do."

And, like humans, the penguins also know how to win a loved one over: "They woo each other with stones which the other partner uses to build a nest," she said. "It's far cheaper than diamond rings and flowers!"

Same-sex behavior has been observed in [1,500 animal species](#), but Overy is overly proud of Oceanworld's same-sex-loving colony.

"In (Central Park Zoo) a gay penguin couple reared a chick and that made international headlines because they were seen as the only gay penguin couple in the world – and yet we have four couples here in our place," she joked.

Other famous penguins couples who play for the same team are [Thelma and Louise](#), an elderly lesbian couple from Kelly Tarlton's Sea Life Aquarium, New Zealand; [Sphen and Magic](#), a male couple who became the loving parents of an egg laid by a negligent heterosexual penguin couple at the Sea Life Sydney Aquarium in Australia; and [Roy and Silo](#) a same-sex couple of male chinstrap penguins from New York City's Central Park Zoo who had a happy 6-year relationship, until everything fell apart. They lost their nest, started fighting, and Silo left Roy for another penguin: a female named Scrappy. Oh, the drama!



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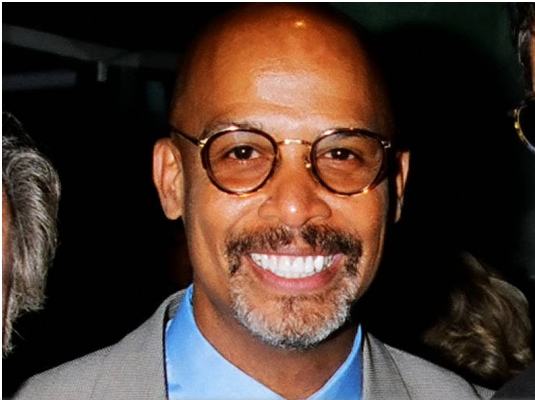
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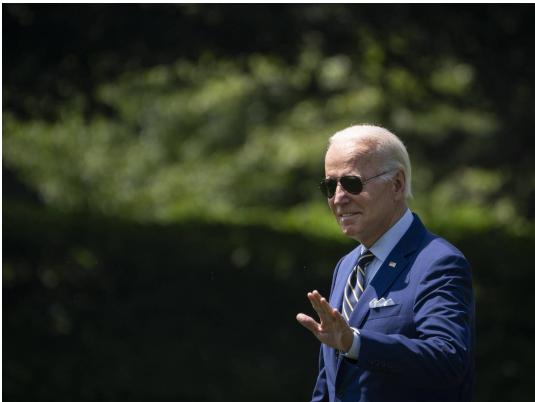
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